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USSR

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RE-ISSUE

COMPLAINT FROM "SERGEJ" ON "MAY's" SHORTCOMINGS (1944)

From: NEW YORK

To: MOSCOW

No: 1442, 1447

11 Oct. 44

[Two-part message complete]

[Part 1] To VIKTOR. [i]

Experience of the work of the OFFICE[KONTORA][ii] during the six months which have elapsed since MAY's[MAJ][iii] arrival has shown that he is incapable of coping with the tasks which are set him. Your instructions giving me responsibilities equal to MAY's can only partially make up for the shortcomings in the work. Conditions of enormous pressure of work in the line of cover; the necessity for security measures which do not allow frequent lengthy visits to the premises of the OFFICE; the great pressure of work on our permanent staff workers [KADROVIKI] in the line of cover - make it impossible for me to take an adequate part in the direction of all lines of work.

I am making every effort to assist MAY in all matters [.]. However, assistance with advice and recommendations cannot make up for the lack of adequate organisational

[47 groups unrecoverable]

side, meetings of fellow workers with him. In answer to my inquiry about the result of the meeting MAY replied that he knew just as little about ALBERT's[iv] work before the meeting with him. There are many examples of this sort of thing. In a conversation with VADIM[v] it came to light that [7 groups unrecovered] telegrams which

Distribution

[Continued overleaf]

S/NBF/T175
(2 Pages)

~~TOP SECRET~~

BRIDE



~~TOP SECRET~~

EIDER

- 2 -

S/NBF/TM 75

he signs. As for people, MAY is utterly without the knack of dealing with them, frequently showing himself excessively abrupt and inclined to nag and too rarely finding time to chat with them. Sometimes our operational workers who work in the same establishment with him cannot get an answer to an urgent question from him for several days at a time. Our permanent staff [KADROVY SOSTAV], noting MAY's inexperience and remoteness from the details of everyday work, do not consider him an authoritative leader [RUKOVODITEL'], which has an effect on working discipline.

Part II] Although since the receipt of your instructions I have formally known about [2 groups unrecovered] work of the OFFICE [2 groups unrecovered]

[55 groups unrecoverable]

in fact it turns out quite differently. [3 groups unrecovered] opportunities for rendering assistance to MAY [Q% and so as a result of] inexperience and failure to understand that his appointment as leader does not signify recognition of his capability, but means that he has been given an opportunity to demonstrate his capabilities in this post, my cooperation cannot make a marked improvement in the position. The appointment as Master of the OFFICE in TYRE [TIR] [vi] of a worker without experience of work abroad is an experiment apparently necessitated by the absence of a qualified candidate.

In my opinion you must decide whether to send here some other experienced leader. MAY will need to work under the supervision of such a permanent staff worker [KADROVIK]. Written instructions from you to MAY cannot make up for lack of experience and knowledge. A worker who has no experience of work abroad cannot cope on his own with the work of directing the TYRE OFFICE.

No. 820
11th October

SERGEJ [vii]

Comments: [i] VIKTOR: Lt. Gen. P.M. FITIN.

[ii] OFFICE: MGB Office in the Consulate-General in NEW YORK.

[iii] MAY : Stepan Zakharovich APRESYAN, Soviet Vice Consul in NEW YORK.

[iv] ALBERT: Unidentified cover-name.

[v] VADIM : Anatolij Borisovich GROMOV, 1st Secretary at the Soviet Embassy, WASHINGTON.

[vi] TYRE : NEW YORK.

[vii] SERGEJ: Vladimir Sergeivich PRAVDIN, Editor of the TASS News Agency in NEW YORK.

S/NBF/TM 75

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